

ST. CLAIR COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

May 20, 2021

Members Present:

Ken Sharkey, Chairman
Jerry Dinges, Assistant Chairman
Robert Allen
Marty Crawford
Matt Smallheer
Robert Trentman
Rick Vernier

Staff Present:

Rick Stubblefield, Director
Jennifer Little, Executive Assistant

Others Present:

None

Call to Order:

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the Governor's Executive order issued March 23rd, 2020 which closed County buildings to the public, the Economic Development Committee Meeting was held via conference call. Chairman Ken Sharkey called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and took roll call.

Due to the nature of the meeting, Rick Stubblefield asked each member the following: "Do we have your authorization to sign your name electronically if needed?"

Response:

Chairman Ken Sharkey – yes
Jerry Dinges – yes
Robert Allen – yes
Marty Crawford – yes
Matt Smallheer – yes
Robert Trentman – yes
Rick Vernier – yes

Approval of the April 15, 2021 Committee Minutes (action required):

Chairman Sharkey called for action on the April 15, 2021 Committee minutes. Mr. Vernier made the motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Dinges. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business (Director's Report):

Rick Stubblefield stated there have been a number of requests for site selection assistance and businesses looking to expand or move. There have also been many requests from businesses in need of employees. He has been working on ways to combat the issue including working with high schools and returning citizens. He noted

companies are looking at St. Clair County because of its workforce development and the population of available workers.

Mr. Stubblefield stated the Southwest Regional Port District that had been idle for a number of years has been brought back up to code. He is currently working to reconstitute the board. The board consists of seven members with a maximum of four members from either political party. Board members must also fall within specific townships. Mr. Stubblefield noted there has been interest in the port as well as grant funding that is available including Department of Treasury funds. He stated Treasury funds can be used for water and sewer infrastructure. The County is interested in those funds for the Centreville area as long as they do not conflict with the funds already received from the Treasury Department.

Mr. Stubblefield stated the Illinois Rental Payment Assistance Program has opened. The County has partnered with IHDA to administer \$7.7 million in rental assistance allocated through the Treasury Department. IHDA administered the previous round of funding and had the existing infrastructure and staff for the program. It would have been a challenge to design a program and expend funds prior to the September deadline. The program has landlords initiate the application; up until now a landlord has been reliant upon the tenant to apply for assistance. Mr. Stubblefield explained the landlord applies online and the tenant receives an email to complete their portion. He stated the feedback from landlords has been positive; the program is running smooth and tenants are getting their emails within fifteen minutes of the landlord completing their portion of the application. Mr. Stubblefield stated he and Jennifer Little have been working with landlords for the past three months to make them aware of the program and prepare them for the process. Per IHDA, in the first two and a half days, 1534 applications have been submitted from St. Clair County; 516 of those have already been completed. In the same timeframe, Madison County has had 400 applications submitted; 140 of those have been completed. Mr. Stubblefield expressed the partnership was the right call and is optimistic St. Clair County will get additional funds that were not expended in other counties on the back end.

There were no further comments or questions.

New Business (Airport Director's Report):

Due to a conflict, Bryan Johnson was unable to attend.

New Business (Military Affairs Director Comments):

Due to a conflict, Kimberly Huth was unable to attend.

Other Comments:

None

Adjournment:

There were no additional comments or questions from the Committee. Chairman Sharkey asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Crawford so moved and it was seconded by Mr. Dinges. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously and the Committee adjourned at 5:09p.m.